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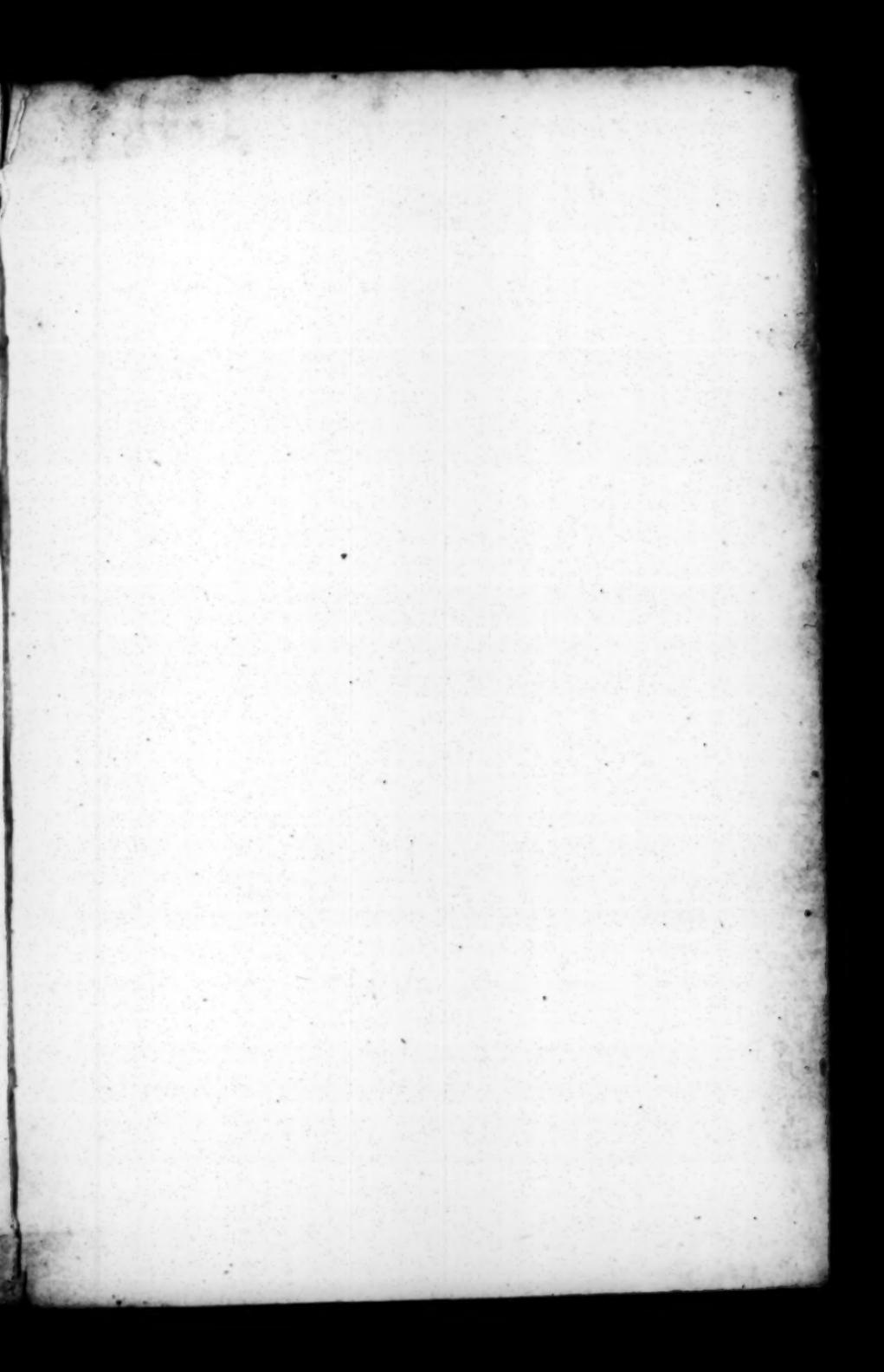
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~~B 10-21~~

T W O
S E R M O N S
P R E A C H E D
Before His
M A J E S T I E S
H I G H
C O M M I S S I O N E R S
And the
E S T A T E S of P A R L I A M E N T.

By the appointment of the Provincial Synod
of *Lothian* and *Tweeddale*.

Upon Sabbath the 7th. of May, 1693.
Unto which is subjoyned the Sermon Preach-
ed at the opening up of the Synod.

May 2. 1693.

By Mr. *William Vetch* Minister of Peebles.

From *Haggai*, 2. 4.
And *Col^{ts}* 4. 17.

Edinburgh, Printed by John Reid, to be sold by Alexander Hen-
derson, Book seller in the Locheen-boubs, Anno 1693.

Jan Jeelburgh

Octrd 3 1693

UNTO HIS GRACE
WILLIAM
DUKE of HAMILTON
THEIR
MAJESTIES
HIGH
COMMISSIONER
For the Ancient KINGDOM of
SCOTLAND, &c.

MAT it please your Grace, If I had
an Offering, that might be any
way Acceptable, There is none to
whom it is so much due, as unto
your Grace; And that because I
drew my first Breath, and had
my first Education, where the Ancient, and Noble Fa-
mily of Dowglas was the Grand Planet, Regnant in
that Hemisphære.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Secondlie, Your Grace, by the Alwise Providence of GOD, and the Choice of our Great, and Gracious Protestant King, being made his Majesties High Commissioner to this Parliament: Stand in the place of Zerubbabel, in my Text, and are chiefly concerned to notice, What GOD calls for at your Hands, in Order to the Building up the walls of Our second Temple, the foundations whereof have been wonderfullie and mercifullie laid some Years ago; And now, Your Grace, and this Honourable and High Court of Parliament, are again called to carrie on this begun Work, both by the Providence of GOD, that hath put a New Opportunitie in Your bands; And the Call of the Preached Word Awakening and stirring You up unto the Work. And O that Your Grace, and this Honourable Court, may give such a speedie Return to both these Calls, as this Jewish Government did: For we may see from the first chapter of this prophesie of Haggai, that within the space of three weeks & three daies; after this Prophets first sermon, they fell zealouslie to the work, and that with great courage and unanimitie; And also without anie further delay, or anie visible dissent among them, and whereas the stoutest of them before had no great mind to the work, now when alarmed by the Prophet, in the Name of the LORD, the verie weakest and most timorous, are forward, and bold to carrie it on. Thirddie, And who could be so fit in all the Nation for this Work, as Your Grace; Being not onlie of so Noble a Descent, where Valour

The Epistle Dedicatory.

lour and Courage has been remarkable for so manie Ages Connatural to the Family: (And let it not be lost in You, especiallie when called to lay it out on so Noble an Interprize, as the Propagation and Protection of Religion, Liberty and Property:) But also, being advanced to Represent the Chief Family of the Kingdom, and whom GOD has blessed with a Goodlie Person, Excellent parts, a Numerous, Noble, and Hopeful Progenie: A Blessing that fits You to speak with Your Enemies in the gate; And that Divine Hand, that has now promoted Your Grace, to so high a Trust, wherein Ye may do great things for the Advancement of CHRIST'S Kingdom, will look for some proportionable Return: If the Great Land-LORD of the World expect a Rent from the meanest Cottage: What a large Revenue must be look for, from so great Families; For, to whom much is given, of them much will be required. Learn to pay this, and it will draw down not onlie Blessings on Your self, but on your Posterity. It was the Honour of Abrahams House, that from Father to Son, ~~and~~ many Generations they were Heirs of the same Promise. Heb: 11. 9. O that there were such a Succession to be found in the House of the Nobilitie, and Gentry of our Land: But alace Plentie abused, disposes to Sin, and Vice: And it is too Ordinarie for the Greatest, and bravest Spirits, to think the Power of Religion, a base and mean thing, which taketh off from their Grandeur, and

The Epistle Dedicatory.

and Esteem among men, and that the strictness of it, is inglorious: But a Conjunction of Goodness and greatness together, is the most Lovelie and comfortable thing in the World; And greatness without Goodness will be a Tastless Cordial at the Long Run.

I have presumed to thrust these following Sheets under Your Graces Patronic, being perswaded that a Favourable Smile from such a Potent Prince, will give them sufficient Protection; And although the Fabrick be mean, yet the Stateliness of the Frontispiece may beget a Curiosity in many to look into it: hoping that your Grace will Pardon wherein I have presumed, and will Favourably accept of the small token of my Sincere affection to your Grace, and those Noble Families (for they that have not Gold must offer Goats Hair) I make Bold to subscribe my self,

YOur GRACES,

Most Humble Servant,

In the LORD,

WILLIAM VETCM.

THE
EPISTLE
TO THE
READER

THREE is none in my Station, (I confess) so unfit to appear in Print, as I am, But the restless importunity of so many persons of all ranks, occasions me to do violence to my own inclinations, in publishing the ensuing sermons; which you have here laid before you, with little addition, or alteration: Only let me tell you, that although I opened up this text, *Haggai 2: 4*. As it referred to the preceeding and subsequent verles of the Chapter, by way of Lecture, and did intermit according to the Custome; yet I have thought fit to put it, and the Forenoons Sermon together as one Entire Discourse.

Another Reason moving me to this undertaking is, That several things spoken in that Great Auditory upon this Subject, are Misrepresented

The Epistle to The Reader

presented, Mistaken, and Mis-improven, which
this may be a mean to Cure, and Remove.

The Entertainment I acknowledge is so
Courte and Man, that I cannot promise it an
universal Acceptance : Seeing too too many in
our Day, (wherein Fancie and Opinion, that
Witch and Enchantress has got the Ascendant of
Religion and Reason) are more devoted to
what may please their palat, then prolong their
health, and life. But if it may (as it is) be any
wise serviceable to the publick good of the
Church, and the work in hand, and any way
profitable to any particular well-wisher, of that
Interest ; I have attained my End. I am,

*One of ZIONS Well-wishers,
And thy Servant,*

W. V.

The First

S E R M O N

HAGGAI 2: 4:

*Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD,
be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech the high
Priest, and be strong all ye People of the Land, saith
the LORD, and work; For I am with you, saith
the LORD of Hosts.*

I Shall for Lecture open up these words, as they referr unto the preceeding and subsequent part of the Chapter, and observe somethings from them, and then go on, and prosecute that Doctrine, which I think most suitable to this Occasion ; I shall not have time to give a large, or Critical Explanation of the Text, with Respect to the persons mentioned in it, or the Prophet that delivered this Message, or annent the time that he was sent to that People, for fear I come short of the main things I purpose to speak to this Honourable *Auditorie*.

We do not read that this People of the *Jews*, to whom this Prophet *Haggai* was sent, had immediatly after their return from the *Babylonish Captivity*, any Prophet among them, and yet

yet they had such as were able to direct them in their work: But they proving sinfully and shamefully negligent and sloathful, for a considerable while after their return, in the work of Reformation which GOD had called them unto: And for which they had the Civil Authority even *Cyrus* his grant. The LORD at length raised up this prophet *Haggai*, and after him *Zerubbabel*, to awaken and stir them up to their dutie, in carrying on this Work that was begun several years ago.

Their neglect and carelessness in this matter was occasioned partly from their own timorousness and weakness, being but few when compared with their Ancestours who builded the first Temple, and with the multitude of Enemies that at present opposed them, &c no wonder they were timorous, having been so long houled and kept at under in *Babylon*. Where their long affliction and Captivirie had dispirited them.

Partly this neglect was occasioned from the bold and violent opposition of enemies that did what they could to marr the begun work of GOD in the Land; Such as *Sanballat the Horonite*, and his Complices.

Partly from their too too much minding the things of the world, and preferring them to the things of GOD, as we have them reproved for it
chapter

chapter 1st, ver. 4th. Is it time for you, O Ye, to dwell in your Cieled houles, and this houle ly waste? and this is a disease that abounds much in our days!

This second chapter wherein my text lyes, is full of encouragement for them, to proceed in the work, notwithstanding of the discouragements on the one hand, and the oppositions they met with on the other.

The first encouragement lyes in the latter words of the text, from the promise of GOD's Prelence with them in this work, *For I am with You, saith the LORD of hosts; therefore be strong and work*; you need not fear all your enemies that oppole you, when I am with you.

The second encouragement for removing their timorousness, and spiriting them to their work is taken from the standing Covenant that was between GOD & them, & that of a long & old date, even since the day that he had brought them out of the land of Egypt; where we have to admire GOD's faithfulness to them in keeping this Covenant, when they were guilty of many breaches thereof to him. Verse 5. *According to the Word that I covenanted with you; when ye came out of Aegypt, so my Spirit remaineth with you, fear ye not.*

The third Encouragement to go on in their work

4. (.)
work is taken from the Lords promise to compense the external despicableness and meaneness of this fabrick they had begun, and about which they were so discouraged, because it had not that Extensiveness and Largeness of Building, neither had they *Solomons* riches to give it that internal splendor and Glory that *Solomons* Temple had, all this the LORD promises to make up, with his own Glory and the Mediators personal presence, verse 7: 8, 9.

The 4. encouragement to proceed in the begun work is: that although for their neglect they were fallen under many Judgements, and especially that of famine, as in the preceeding Chapter Verse, 6. *Ye have sown much, and brought in little,* and also in this Chapter, *When they came to an heap of twenty Measures, they proved but ten,* when they came to the Press to draw out fifty Vessels full, it filled but twenty, Verse 16. By which ye might easily have conjectured that I had a controversy with you; And it concerned you to have enquired unto the causes of my controversy: But now sayes the LORD *If ye will proceed in the work, O Zerubbabel, Joshua and the people, I will remove these Judgements, and bring Blessings in the room of them.*

The last Argument which is very considerable to move and encourage them to go on in their work, and should have great weight with us

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us; Who are affraid of the Nations about u's is the LORDS promising Satety and Security to them, in the midst of great Commotions, and desolating Judgements upon the Nations round about; As if he would say, though I make Kings and Nations fall by the Ears and destroy one another, though you may hear it or see it, yet it shall not come near you, and this we see in the last verses of the Chapter, and it is like that sweet Promise to the Church, *Psak. 91. 7, 8. Verses, A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand: But it shall not come nigh thee; Only with thine eyes shall thou bebold and see the reward of the wicked.*

In the *Verse* we have read to you more, particularly we have these things to be considered.

1. The Exhortation *be strong* and work, this is the Call which the LORD sends by the Prophet *Haggai*.
2. We have the persons to whom this Call and Message is directed and sent, and that is to *Zerubbabel* to *Joshua*, and to all the People: Magistrates Ministers and People, they are the Persons to whom this Call comes.
3. We have the person calling, and that is the LORD of Hosts, by his Prophet *Haggai*. Thus saith the LORD of Hosts.
4. We have the Arguments which the LORD makes use of in this *Verse*, to press them unto the giving of a Cordial and present

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sent Obedience unto this Call and Message ;
and these Arguments are two, which ye would
do well to take notice of, one of them is taken
from the Patience of GOD, another is taken
from the Promise of GOD. That which is
taken from the Patience and Forbearance of
GOD, lies in the first Words of the *Verse* (yet
now) after so long a foreflowing and neglect of
the Work in you ; (as if the LORD would say)
and after so long Patience and Forbearance in
me, it concerns you to fall upon this Work
that I call you to, I might have come and de-
stroyed you after I brought you out of Babylon,
for your unanswerableness to My Command,
yet have I forbore and stretched out My Pa-
tience towards you, and put a new opportunity
in your hands, and given you a new Call,
ought not My former Patience and Forbear-
ance, and My present Goodness to lead you to
Repentance, to mourn over and redress the
wrongs that you have been formerly guilty of.

The second Argument that backs this Call
withall, is in the last words of the Text, and
that is the promise of his being with them in this
undertaking, *For I am with you saith the LORD
of Hosts.*

5ly. We have this message delivered with a
double note of attention, to the leading men in
Church and State, (persons too incident to be
heeded

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heedless) importing no less than this, that it concerned such as them at this verie Juncture, to give ready Obedience to GOD's Call, to be Zealous, and so a good example, to all the people under them: this note of attention calls all to take special notice of GOD's Messenger now unexpectedly sent to them, and also of the message that he carries.

And then in the last place we have this remarkable, Thus saith the LORD, thrice repeated, the design of which I take to be this to clear, & confirm them in this call, as if the Prophet Haggai had said, *it is not my message, a sick-brain fancie, or notion of mine,* but it is the command of JEHOVAH the Lord of Hosts.

I might observe from these words several things; As

(1.) That the People of GOD may be called by a *wonderful cast of Providence,* and an Extraordinary Hand of GOD, out of great trouble and affliction, to carrie on a work of Reformation, and yet when they are most clearly called to it, it may meet with great Rubbs and impediments: You see they were called to this, and yet it meets with great opposition; and they also notwithstanding of GODS Call, were careless and superficial in prosecuting this so great, so necessarie, and so profitable a work.

(2lie.) I might observe this, That the LORD takes

takes special notice of H-s people , how they manage precious opportunities for His glory, his Churches good, and the advancement of Religion which are put in their hands, and therefore he sends this Prophet *Haggai* to teprove their bypast disobedience and negligence , and to awaken them to their dutie for the future. But the main Doctrine which I take to comprehend the very scope of the words is this, *That it is the dutie of all ranks of people in a land , to be strong and join cordiallie , and unanimously together to carrie on a begun work of Reformation, when the LORD eminently calls them to it, & promises to be with them in it.* And this is the Doctrine, that through the LORDS Assistance , I purpose to stand on, in prosecuting whereof , I shall follow this method.

1. To shew you what is meant here by, (*be strong.*) and that I shall do first positively, shewing what it truely imports. 2. Negativelie, what it prohibites.

In the next place, I shall give you the Reasons of the doctrine , why all ranks of persons in a Land, should be strong and join cordially together , to carrie on a begun work of Reformation, when the LORD eminently calls them to it.

And lastly, I shall give you the use of all ; This is the work that lyes before me. First, then

then by *Being strong*, is positively, and plainly meant in Scripture phrase, to take courage and resolution, that persons of all ranks, whom GOD calls to his Service, should put on courage and resolution, especially such as GOD sets up in publick Offices; Ye may see this clear in the case of *Joshua*, in his first chapter, verse 9, When the *LORD* calls furth *Joshua* to install him in a publick Office, which he was to manage for bringing the People of *GOD* through *Jordan*, out of the wildernes, and to bring them to the possession of *Canaan*, and to go before them as their Captain General in the Wars, by which they were to execute *GODS* threatened judgements in destroying these Nations that were accursed, and were to meet with ~~manie~~ a bloodie Rancounter in the doing thereof; how does the *LORD* in order to all this, encourage *Joshua*, in this 9 verse, *Have not I commanded thee?* *Be strong, and of a good courage, be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed, for the LORD thy GOD is with thee, whersoever thou goest.* Magistrates are to be men of courage, Exod. 18. 21. *Thou shalt* (saith the *LORD* to *Moses*, *I provide thee able men, out of all the people, such as fear GOD, men of truth, hating covetousness.* The Original word in the Hebrew, *is men of courage and strength;* Yea, they that are in publick Office must not only put on

courage and resolution, but they must evidence it in the right management of the trust put in their hands *Nehemiah chap. 6. 11.* *Should such a man as I flee;* Nay, I will neither fear, nor flee, but stand it out against *Sanballat*; and all his Complices, and all their power, their scoffs, their threats, their plots, this was the Answer he gave to such as were telling him such frightfull stories. That the Enemies would be too strong for him, that they would runn him and that work down, that he was come from *Arsaxerxes* with a new Commission to propagate and carrie on; but he puts on Courage and Resolution as an Antidote against all these Fears: I say, That persons that are Magistrates and Ministers, and such as have a publick Trust committed to them by the *LORD*, should be men of great courage, especiallie in a time when Reformation and Temple-work is in hand, as is my Text.

Samuel was a man of courage, 1 Sam. 15. 25.
to the 30 verse, when he told King Saul plainly
his sins, And That GOD had rejected him therefore,
and rent the Kingdom from him.

Elijah also was a man of great Resolution and Courage, as you may see in that conference between Obadiab and him, 1 Kings 18. ver. 15. &c. And when he told a threatening *Abab*, ver. 18.

That

That it was he and his fathers house that troubled Israel, in that he had forsaken the LORD and followed Baalim.

And the Priests of the LORD were men of Courage; 2 Chron. 26. 17, 18: when they resisted King Uzziah, invading the Churches privileges

21. I take this to be meant by (be strong and work) to be Livelie, Active, and diligent, in the work which they were now called to by the LORD, that they not only have a fitednes for their work, but that they be faithfull and diligent in the dispatch of it, and indeed I find that the Wise man. Eccles: 9: 10. does commend diligence & activitie in all a mans lawfull busines in the world: *Whosoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, &c.* How much more commendable must it be, to be active and diligent in the great concernments of GOD and of His House, and Glorie, that must be a thing much more regarded than the concerns of our own houses; And that ist becaule the matters of God are preferable to our matters, that is the thing, that should be upon the heart, and Conscience, and affections of everie person, of publick trust, they should set the matters of GOD foremost, like thole persons, Psal: 137 ver: 5, 6. *If I forget thee, O Zion; If I preferr not thee, to my chief Joy, let my right hand forget her cunning;*

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and let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.

Secondly. This diligence and Activity for GOD and his matters with which we are entrusted, is the diligence that brings in the greatest Reward: though alace it is little believed; there are many of you that hears me this day, that if you would lay out your selves in places and stations for GOD and his work, it would bring you a greater reward, than you are aware of, and you will be made to see that your neglect in this thing will be of dreadfull consequence at the long run, and that the peruite of the things of the world, which divert you from this main businels, will bring you no comfort, and be of no signification, except it be to disquiet your conscience, and increase your torment.

Thirdly, From this consideration, People of all Ranks should be moved to great Faithfulness, Activity and Dilligence in the Matters of GOD, becaule the Enemies that oppose this Work, are very diligent, lively and active, *Psal: 38. 19. Verse, But mine Enemies are lively, and they are strong, and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied.* The Godly man complains here of his Enemies (you see) That they were strong and livey, but does this discourage him; Nay, but on the contrare, it awakens him to a more vigorous prosecution of his Work.

Thirdly, This Exhortation being directed to

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all sorts of Persons, States-men, Church-men, and Commons (to be strong and work) it calls all those cordially to unite and joyn together to build up the Temple of GOD, whose foundations are already laid, and then they shall accomplish the Prophesie of the latter dayes, Zeph: 3. 9. *For then will I turn to the people a pure Language, that they may all call upon the Name of the LORD to serve him with one consent:* And as the words are rendred in the Originall Language, they shall serve the LORD with one Shoulder; I suppose that many may have heard of the Father that had a great many Sons, and when he was going to make his Latter Will, he called for them, and commended unto them a keeping of Unity, and Harmony together in their Converse and Businels, which would greatly tend to their Comfort and Advantage, and to demonstrate this to them, he caused bring a Sheaf of Arrows, closely tyed together, and gave them to the Eldest to break, but he could not break them, and so he gave them to the Younger sucessively, and they could not break them, but when they were divided, they were easily broken, so it is with Magistrates, Ministers, and People in the Land; When they unanimously and cordially joyn together in the Work of GOD, they cannot easily

easily be broken, and destroyed; We say, *vis unita fortior*, and **Unanimity** in the work of **GOD** when all joyn together as it were with one Shoulder without lying by, or interfiering, or drawing back, or obstructing one another is a good token of a thriving work; when Magistrates make such *Laws* as authorize only the true worship of *GOD*, and take care to see them duely execute, that such as hinder uniformity in Religious Worship may be remov-ed, that to the *Doctrine*, *Worship*, *Discipline*, *Government* of the *House* of the *GOD* of Hea-ven, may be according to the *Laws* of the *GOD* of heaven through the whole Land: For purity of *Doctrine* does not consist in a LawlessLiberty or Tolleration for men to do, and say what they please in matters of Religion: But it con-sists in a joyn't uniformity to *Worship* *GOD*, according to his own precept, and this promise (they shall all serve the *LORD* with one Consent) which was calculate for the latter days: So much then you see is implied in this Exhorta-tion (*be strong*) *viz*: Courage and Resolu-tion, Activity and Diligence, with Unity and Har-mony.

In the next place I come to shew you nega-tively what this Exhortation (*be strong*) prohi-bits, or what is not meant by it. As 1. It for-bids

bids timorousness, for men to be possessed with a humane or slavish fear, that keeps them back from their Duty to *GOD*, and His Work in their Station, this is a thing very unbecoming to such as are *Zerubbabels*, *Joshuas*, and *Nehemias*, should such persons as they fear, Whom had they to be afraid of, but cursed *Canaanites*, and such as were no better in after Generations: What could *Nehemiah* and these that were with him be afraid of, when he was come from *Babylon*, cloathed with the Kings Letters and Authority, in order to the carrying on of the forflowed work of Reformation; surely he had not the King, neither the *GOD* of Heaven; nor the honest party of the Land to be afraid of; I know none that might be a terror to him, and them that were joyned with him but the *Gerizzim* party, who were sinfully united to oppose violently and cunningly the building of the Temple, and the true Worship of *GOD*, that they would so gladly have destroyed: Let me say it to this Honourable and High Court of Parliament without offence, and in all Humanity, what have you to be afraid of, that you should be faint hearted in the Work of *GOD*; surely it cannot be of the *GOD* of Heaven, nor of our Gracious King and Queen, nor of the Protestant Princes abroad, nor of such

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as are true Protestants at home ; sure all these will be Cordial Friends to our carrying on the Work of Reformation, and when ye have all these on your side, you may well be strong, and put on Courage and Resolution, for you have a mighty great backing : But of whom are you indeed afraid ? Is it of the Pope, or of the French King, and his Allies, or is it of the Gerizim party of these Lands, That they get up their head again, and that ye and your Post-
erity, and Estates be ruined ? Surely the Midwives of *Egypt* will rise up in Judgement against you, who were in worse Circumstances then you are, and yet were not afraid of the wrath of the King, but even over the Belly of Dangerous Laws befriended the Children of *Israel* : How much more should ye whom GOD in his Providence has raised up to Midwife out the Churches deliverance , and are under the terror of no bad Laws, to frighten you from your work : Put on Courage and Resolution to help your Travelling Mother the Church, to bring forth the Man-Child of a Glorious Reformation, and then I may promise ye shall be blessed as these Midwives were, *Exod. 1. 21.* Of whom it is said, *because they feared the LORD, he made them houses* : That is he preserved, and Increased, Propagated, and Enriched them and their

their Familys. Will you read & believe that Scripture, *Isaiah 51. 12, 13.* verses, compared with the 7 verse, *I even I am he, that comforteth you, who art thou that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass, and forgettest the LORD thy Maker, Who hath stretched forth the Heavens, and laid the foundations of the Earth?* And hast feared continualie everie day, because of the furie of the oppreffour, as if he were readie to destroy, and where is the furie of the oppreffour. And verse 7. *Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be afraid of their revilings.* For verse 8. *The Moth shall eat them like a Garment, and the Worms shall eat them like Wool, but my Righteousness shall be for ever, and my Salvation from Generation to Generation.* But if these Enemis were never so formidable, and numerous. Let me bespeak you as the Leaders of the *Philistins* did their Armie, *1 Sam: 4: 9. O Be strong and quite yourselves like men;* do your duty with Resolution, Courage, and Faithfulness, and the LORD shal be with you to deliver the Land from these Task-Masters. But if ye be not strong, &c: then you may provoke GOD to let us fall before the *Pbli-*
listins, even at *Ebenezer*, verse 1. and 2. The place where GOD has hitherto helped, will you take that prophetical Encouragement for the latter dayes to animate you to the work,

Dan:

Dan. 11. 32. For those such as do wickedly against the Covenant, be Corrupted by Flatteries, yet the People that know their GOD shall be strong and do Exploits: And if there be still any of you false and faint-hearted, in the Matters of GOD and the King, then I Proclaim Gideons Proclamation, Judges.

J. 3. Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead: And that Proclamation, Dent: 20. and 8 verle, And who is there that is fearful and faint-hearted, let him go and return unto his house, lest his Brethrens Heart faint as well as his Heart.

Secondly, This Call, be strong and work, thrice repeated, and thrice backed with, Thus saith the LORD, prohibits all further delay of the matter, this People had done it too too long. You that are Magistrats, Ministers, and people would delay this businels no longer, for by so doing: 1st. You discourage friends, and begets many fears in them, and doubtings what may be the Issue of such delays, and whether this begun work will thrive or not, and this cannot but beget a great deal of sorrow in the hearts of the Godly,

Secondly. This gives great encouragement to the opposite partie, and puts a further opportunity in their hands, to gather to a greater strength against the present work, to marr it, and if they could

could to overturn it: yea your fears and backwardnes gives the enemies to take greater heart and Courage: Therefore let me say to you as the *Gibeonites* did to *Joshua*, chap. 10, 6. *Slack not thy hand, from thy servants, come up to us quickly and save us, for all the Kings of the Amorites, that dwell in the mountains are gathered together against us.* You see the sad effects of a short delay, *Exod: 32, 1.* When *Moses* stayed but fourty days upon the mount, the people fell to Idolatrie, and what if your lingring to bring us out of the land, I had almost said, *Sodom like state*, that we have too long been into; draw down remarcable Judgements on us, as it did on that people. *Gen: 19, 16, 17 ver:* and are there not many of the people of *GOD* crying out, as it is *Judges 5, 28.* *Why are his Chariot wheels so long of coming.*

Thirdly, This Call in my Text (*be strong, &c.*) prohibits a *Laish* carelesness, and a *Gallios* unconcetnednes in the great matters amongst your hands, and calls for Seriousnes, Wisdom, and diligence in the managing of so great a Trust, and not to be like that Peo le, of whom it was laid, *they dwelt carelesly, Judges 18. 27.* They were a quiet and secure people, and the *Danites* came upon them, and burnt their City with fire: Ye know *Gallios* Character, *Act 18. 17. verse,* *He cared for none of these things: And is there any*

any thing under Heaven, that we should be so much concerned about, or careful of, as the Work of GOD committed to us. And Magistrates, and all other persons concerned would often Remember, that as it is Great Trust, that is committed to them, so they must Answer for the right or wrong Management of it before an Impartial Judge, which should make us to endeavour so to act in our Station, as we may be approven, and accepted of him in that day. But peradventure this Argument will have greater weight with many, GOD in His Providence, hath put our Religion, Libertys, and Properties in one bottom, and he must have been very blind that did not see, that when our Religion was almost gone, our Liberties and Properties were following hard, and running the same fate, the one was going with the other. Therefore we would do well to have a special respect to, and care of the Work of GOD, now while we are called to recover it, and establish it, for it is the surest mean, for preserving our Liberties and properties, and if we neglect the one, GOD may be provoked, to permitt our Enemies to Robbe us of all.

Fourthly, This Exhortation (be strong) seeing it calls (as we have said) to unitie and Harmonie so on the other hand it prohibites Magistrats, Ministers

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Ministers & people to fall into divisions and factions; for that will indeed make them weak, & so mar, & retard the work they are called to, If Satan & his instruments can make GODS Ministers and people, to differ and clash among themselves, they know it will prove a notable mean to overthrow the work of GOD among your hands; *divide & impera* is a Stratagem still made use of in all Ages; and it is not out of fashion yet, and O that we may not have no more reason to lament the divisions of our *Reuben*, *Piz:* (our rulers as the first born were) with that Lamentation, with which *Deborah* and *Barak* Lamented their divisions, because they came not out to help the LORD against the mighty, but abode among the sheepfolds; when they were eminently called, to arise and unanimously to appear, and joyn for the reviving of the Work of GOD, that was lying in the Ashes, and though all the people of GOD in the Land were called to joyn with them, from all Corners, and help them in this work; Yet many lurked and withdrew, fearing that Undertaking might not prosper, and then if they had joyned, their Estates would have been Ruined; how was *Deborah*, and *Barak* affected with this, as we may read in that doubled Lamentation, *Judges*, 5. 15. and 16. verles, verse 15. *For the divisions of Reuben,*
there

there were great thoughts of Heart, and these divisions the more they thought on them, were more deeply affecting & wounding, & therefore they must sigh and lament it over again. verle 16. For the divisions of Reuben, there were great searchings of heart enquiring (as it were) what might be the cause of these lamentable divisions, as also what might be the Cure.

I come now to the Reasons of the Doctrine, which shew you why all Ranks of people in the Land, should be strong and joyn cordially and unanimously together to carry on a begun work of Reformation.

Reason 1. Because it is GODS Work ; the building of His House, and the reforming of His Church from corruptions that it has been defiled with ; is the most Honourable, Eminent, and special Work, that GOD calls the Children of men to, in this World. David did see, and think it to be a very Honourable and Excellent Work, when he made so many, and great preparations to bring home the Ark, which was fourty years out of its place : When he mustered up Thiriy thousand of the chosen men of Israel to bring it from Kirjath Jearim : and we may not only see his fortitude and courage in this Undertaking but his Zeal, as ye have it set down, Psal: 132. *I will not go up to my bed, nor give sleep to mine eyes, nor slumber to mine eye lids,*

eye lids, till I find out a place for the Mightie GOD of Jacob. And when they came to the Ark, you see what is their supplication. Verse 8. *Arise, O LORD to thy rest; We are come to carrie GOD back again; (so to speak) and the Ark of GOD, that has been so long out of the Land, and out of the Sanctuary, we see also how gladly, he would have been at the building of the Temple, and what preparations he had made for it, But when he saw that the honour was to be conferred upon his Son Solomon, how does he press him to towardnes, and faithfulness in that matter.* 1 Chron: 22. to the 14. *Now my Son, The LORD be with thee, only the LORD give thee Wisdom and Understanding; and give thee Charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the Law of the LORD thy GOD, then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the Statutes and Judgements, which the LORD charged Moles with concerning Israel; Be strong, & of good Courage, dread not nor be dismayed: So that you see what estimate this great and holy man, put upon the work of GOD, and how concerned he was about it, as the principal business he had to do in the World, and 1 Samuel 2 30 verse: GOD hath said, he that honours me, I will honour. O how dangerous is it, to have an opportunity put in our hand, to serve GOD, and his Interest: and not to guide it well, and what ever figure any of You may*

may make in the World; yet you only signify so far in the sight of GOD, as You act for him in your Station and Generation, and do you not know, that many may stand for a great summe & make a great figure in the eyes of men, that will stand but for *ciphers* in *Heavens Arithmeticke*.

Reason second. As it is GODS Work so he visiblie, clearly, and eminently, calls us to it, and that by these six Calls.

First, By the call of his word; for the Reformation we are called to, is that which is suited unto GODS Law, contained in his written Word, and the LORD hath Honoured Scotland beyond many other Nations of the World, in that he hath written unto us the great things of his Law, *Hosea*, 8. 12. O that we may not count them a light thing: And may it not be said of us; as *Psal: 146: 19, 20: He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his Judgements unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with every Nation.* Have we then GODS Laws, His Statutes, and his Judgements, then certainly we have them either for something, or nothing, and can they be given us for any thing else, but to direct our service and obedience to GOD, and is there any of you, the honourable members of this Parliament, that will make Laws and promulgate them, and would not take it ill, if the people

ple did not Obey: Would you not Judge such disobedient persons to the Law to be Rebels, and punish them accordingly: Of how much sorcer punishment will they be found worthy, that take no heed to the Laws of GOD, revealed in His Word, that they may give a Constant and Conscientious Obedience thereunto.

Now the Reformation that we are called to is most suitable unto this Divine Law, which has been owned contended for, and witnessed to by the Godly party in the Land, and that of all Ranks both while they lived, & when they dyed, and that as the purest Reformation of any *Protestant Church*; and this was testified many years ago, by a great man of this Nation; who blessed GOD that he was born in a Church, whose Reformation was purer then that of *England, of France, or Geneva*: And seeing we have Ordinances, Means, and Opportunities again put in our hands: Persons of all Ranks had need to take Care to manage them so, as we may give a good account of the Trust committed to us. But least I transgres too far and trespass upon your patience. I shall Close at this time.

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S E R M O N

HAGGAI 2: 4:

*Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD,
be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech the bigb
Priest, and be strong all ye People of the Land, saith
the LORD, and work: For I am with you, saith
the LORD of Hosts.*

THERE is nothing more to be lamented by the Sons of Men, then this one thing, that we have sinned our selves unto such a benighted and dark Condition, as that we can neither take up our danger aright to flee from it, nor our Duty, and what is the rightest season for the right performance thereof: So that in this Case we are more to be pittied then the beasts of the field. *For the Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Masters Crib; But Israel doth not know, My Peo-ple doth not consider: Isaiah, 1.3. Yea, Jer:8.7: Yea then the birds of the Aire, for the stork in the Heaven knoweth her appointed times, and the Turtle and the Cran*

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Cran, and the Swallow, observe the time of her coming, but My People know not the Judgement of the *LORD*; And is it not a great peice of Condescending Love and Mercy in *GOD*, that when we neither know nor consider our Work, nor the season of it, he Condescends to send ~~messengers~~ messengers to put us in mind of both; This people when they proved Negligent in the greatest and most Important business, in which their happiness was folded up: He sends the Prophet *Haggai*, to tell them what they had to do, and what they had neglected, and that if they would mourn for what Sins they had committed, and what duties they had neglected, & be zealous and careful for the future in answering and obeying what *GOD* called them unto, all bygones should be bygones. (If I may so speak) yet now be Strong, &c. You know the Doctrine I was upon: That it is the dutie of all Ranks of People in a Land to joyn Cordially and unanimously together to carrie on a begun work of Reformation, when the *LORD* Eminently calls unto it, and promises to be with them in it. I am come the length of the 2d. reason of the Doctrine, to shew (this Honourable Auditory) that as this work, is the work of *GOD*, so he doth Eminently call you to it, and that first by the call of his word, as I have

I have touched: for if the Laws of Heaven given to the Jewish Church, did oblige them to renounce all Idolatrie, and false worship, and to reform and worship GOD, precisely according to the Divine Institution, do they not equalie oblige us, are they not the rule in our day, as *Abrahams* well as they were in their day, he ^{was} not given us these statutes, laws and Judgements for that very end, that he gave them to the Church of old, which if we do we shall live in them, and which if we dis obey and despise, they will not a little contribute to aggravate our Condemnation.

The second Call, To cartie on a begun work of Reformation, is that of eminent and remarkable providences, when there has been nothing for many years, but a mixture of sad things to the Land, and the work of GOD in it, carried on by the *black Horses*, and *speckled Horses*, (if I may say so) strange and sad dispensations of Providence, whereby *Jacob* was given to the *spoil*, and *Israel to the Robbers*, whereby we were brought unto the brink of the pit, & ready to perish, all our expectations failing us upon the right and left hand, giving all up for lost, both our Civil and Sacred concerns, that at such a nick of distress as this, the *LORD* should by his wonderful providence raise up a Deliverer

Deliverer to his own Church, another *Cyrus*; Yea and greater then *Cyrus*. to give us such Reviving from out bondage, as we are Witnesses to this day, this is a thing that Remarkably calls us to observe the doing of the *LORD*, and he who sees it not to be the doing of *JEHOVAH* must be lamentably blind: And does not our great and Gracious King; be speak you the Honourable Members of Parliament in the words that *David* bespoke his Princes. *1 Chron.*

22. 17 Verse, To the end: David also commanded all the Princes of Israel to help Solomon his Son, saying, is not the LORD your GOD with you; and hath He not given you Rest on every side, for he hath given the inhabitants of the Land unto mine hand, and the Land is subdued before the LORD, and before his people. Verse, 19 Now therefore set your heart and your Soul to seek the LORD your GOD; Arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the LORD GOD, to bring the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, and the holy Vessels of GOD into the house, that is to be built to the Name of the LORD. This is a thing that any thinking Person, when they seriously consider: Cannot but admire, and say, that this is a remarkable and Eminent call of the providence of GOD, to carrie on a begun work of Reformation when such an undiscryed, and unexpected opportunity is put in our

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our hands, and I am sure nothing will make his Majestie more renowned in after Generations of the World, than that he has kept so just a proportion, between his first declarations for the saftie and good of the *Protestant Religion*, and his future aetings; and in this he A&ts like the high and Noble Family of whom he is descended, who have been the great Protectours, and Propogators of the *Protestant Religion* and is not this a new call of his Providence: that though we these years bygone, have not so well manage opportunities pur in our hand, for advancing the work of GOD; he gives us this one opportunity more: For if he had not shewed his more then ordinary care these years bygone to preserve the work that he had begun, and to keep the Ark in its returning from being over-turned by special casts of providence, this begun deliverance had been utterly frustrated, and spoiled by our ill management; but O that we could admire the wisdom and goodness of GOD (and I take it as a Token for good) that he has preserved his begun work over the Bellie of the cunningest and strongest devices of adverlaries, and of the undexterous and careleſs managment of friends.

The *third Call*, To carrie on the work of Reformation, is from our *Mother the Church of Scotland*

Scotland, and that natural dutie, and becoming
kindnes, that we owe to her, as such who is
not yet got out of her Ruines, she calls to us
who are her professed Children, as the Jewish
Church did of old to hers, by the Prophet Isa-
iah Chap: 51, 18. *verse.* *Is there none to guide
her among all the Sons whom She hath brought forth?
is there none that taketh her by the hand, of all the Sons
that She hath brought up?* They would be counted
unnatural Children, that would no thelp their na-
tural Mother, that gave them a natural life, out
of her afflictions and distresses; how much more
unnatural Children must they be, that will not
help that Mother out of her miseries and trou-
bles (Especially when an Eminent Opportu-
nity is put in their hands) from whom they
pretend to derive a Spiritual and Eternal Life:
They that refuse to do this, they evidence them-
selves to be bastards, and not true Sons of the
Church. Thele perions hearts are like to that
Mother, that said to King Solomon, *She would
have him to divide the Child,* but the true Mother
was of another Sentiment, who said *I would rather
ye should be Mother,* false as you are than the
Child should be divided; And by this she dis-
covered her naturall Affection. I say then, we
Evidence our selves to be Bastards, and not true
Children of the Church, that are not for ad-
vancing

vancing the work of the Houle of G O D, for setting up all the Pillars and Ordinances thereof. The Doctrine, Discipline, Worship, and Government of the House of the GOD of Heaven, according to the Laws of the GOD of Heaven, (the work must not be divided) and doing what in us lyes *Nebemiah* like, for that end, he was a man concerned in the City of his GOD, and sepulchres of his Fathers that were lying wast, he was a man that sought the well-fare of *Israel*, And what did he ? I will tell you what he did, he obtained Letters from the King to Reverse Letters and Orders that the Enemys of GOD had received for hindering of the building, for you will see in the Book of *Ezra*, Chap: 4: from the 4: verse, *That the people of the Land who were Gerizzim party did exceedingly weaken the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in the building.* And verie 5: *They bired Counsellours against them to frustrate their purpose,* & the S. verse gives an account who they were, *Rebum the Chancellour, and Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their Companions,* mentioned verse 9. And when they obtained thele Letters, they soon put them in execution to marr the pro- perty of the People, and Work of GOD; as you see in the 23: verse, of that Chapter, *Now when the Copy of Artaxerxes Letter was read before*

Rebum

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Rebism, and Shimshai, the scribe and their Companions, they went up in haste to Jerusalem, and to the Jews, and made them to cease by force and power, &c. But honest and good Nebemiah was much concerned for this, and was at no quiet till he procured Letters from the King, that his stop might be taken away, that stood in the way of the Reformation, he is made the Remarkable Instrument to discover this plot, that was for overturning the new begun Work of GOD and removing the impediments, and was never at rest till he got the Work set on foot again.

Now if the LORD in His Wonderful and gracious Providence, raise up some such Courier or Cup-bearer in our day (Nebemiah-like) when the case of our Church, and the Work of GOD in the Land, runs so much parallel with this, to get the plots and Plotters discovered, that oppose this begun Work of GOD, the Letters ranverse, and the Impediments removed, and Instructions from the King, to carry on the begun Work of GOD; Should not this be observed, as a new and Eminent call of GOD, for Clearing, Confirming, and Encouraging all Ranks of people in the Land, to build up the Walls of the LORDS Temple among us; And in this glasse of Providence may we not see clearly, that new Plots are like old

old Plots, new Opposition to the Work of GOD, like the old Oppositions, and new Deliverances like old Deliverances.

The Fourth Call to carry on this begun work of Reformation, is from the Noble Examples and Presidents in Scripture, who when ever the Providence of GOD put an opportunity in their hands, opened the doors of the House of the LORD, set up the Instituted Worship of GOD and removed the corruptions and defilements that *Idolaters* and others had brought unto the Temple, ye see a famous Instance of this Work of our Imitation in that good King Hezekiah, 2 Chron: 29: and 3: verle, *He in the first Year of his Reign, in the first moneth, opened the doors of the house of the LORD, and repaired them, and he brought in the Priests and the Levites and gathered them together unto the East street; and said unto them, Hear me ye Levites, sanctifie your selves, and sanctifie the house of the LORD GOD of your fathers, and carrie forth the filthiness out of the holie place.* Verse 6. *For our fathers have trespassed, and done that which was evil in the eyes of the LORD our GOD, and have forsaken him, and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the LORD, and turned their backs, &c.* See also what good *Jehosaphat* and tender *Josiah* did in this matter, for Recovering and Advancing the work of Reformation

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 formation ; as they were great men , so they were greatly concerned in their day and Generation for the Truths of GOD , for which they bear an honourable and favourie character in all Ages , while others that were opposers of GODS work have a black mark put upon them .

The *Fifth Call* , To carrie on this work of Reformation , is from the eminent Apostasie , and abounding wickedness , and profanitie that has followed thereupon in our Land ; great backslidings , as they call for great Repentings , so also for Remarkable and great Returnings ; especially when GOD gives unto People repeated calls thereunto : and have not we had such Remarkable and Repeated Calls , both from the VVord , and eminent providences ; GOD has again and again spoken to us in that language that he spoke to His Church in the days of *Jeremiah* , as you may see in his third chapter the 1 , the 14 , and 22 verles , where we have the call for Returning thrice repeated , And O that the Inhabitants of our Land might give in such an anwer as is recorded in that 22 verse , *Return ye backsliding children* , there is the Call , *and I will beat your backslidings* , there is the motive , And O that we could give in such an answer as follows , *Behold we come unto Thee* , for *Thou art the Lord*

LORD our GOD. O ye who pretend to be concerned in the work of Reformation, will ye see if ye can prevent Souls from going down to the pit: Let there be such Laws made and revived, and carefully put in execution, as may suppress crying and abounding abominations, inconsistent with a true and through Reformation, such as Sabbath-breaking, swearing, drunkennes, and whoredom, the predominant sins in our Age, that cannot but draw down vengeance on the Land if not prevented. As also, all Anti-christianism error, and ungodliness, and seeing the season of doing this is put in the hands of Magistrates and Ministers, if they joyn not together and make a right use of it, for the end given, then it is likely to draw down that threatened judgement, Ezek. 24. 13. verse, Because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my furie to rest upon thee. And that judgement which our Saviour pronounced upon that people who had a day and season of Reformation and Salvation given them, but they made ill use of it, and therefore you see, Luke 19. 41. how He laments their folly, (and that with tears,) before He pronounce their doom, if thou hadst known even thou, at least in this thy day the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are

are bid from thine eyes. And we know not how soon the day may come , when our Enemies shall cast a trench against us, and lay us and our Temple even with the ground, because we know not the time of our visitation ; VVe never read that Chtist wept but twice , and one of them was at the prospect of the death & burial of His Ancient Spouse, the *Jewish Church* : VVe have had a Three years and an half Gospel-day, which is thought to have been the time that **CHRIST** the *Sun of Righteousness* , after He appeared to preach the Gospel, shined in the Orb of Gospel Ordinances unto this Church , And yet that day proved not the day of their deliverance, but only of their Tryal, and of ripening of them for a more desolating strok of Judgment ; under which they ly unto this very day; And may we not be afraid that this be our very case, for we have had as long a season, and are like as badly to improve it : And therefore I may put this Question to one and all of you to tefolve ; VVhether this be a time of tryall, or a time of deliverance that we are under? (for several judicious Christians do doubt of it) But you who are the Members of this Honorable Parliament have an opportunity to put in your hands, which if you manage well , may give a decision unto this Question : And O that

that you may have wisdom, Courage, and Resolution given you so to do.

The sixth Call, To carrie on this begun work of Reformation, is GOD's promise to be with you, whom he calls and employs in this publick service, and this is plainly, and I may say powerfully express in the last words of the Text (*for I am with you*) this is a clear and comfortable promise, and then he backs it with power and Authority, and O that it might be so upon our hearts, when he says, *I am with you saith, the LORD of hosts*, This tittle JEHOVAH is thrice repeated, but in the last place it is thus express the *LORD of hosts*, which must import some what beyond the former two, and has certainly a great Emphasis in it, the scope of which I take to be for removing their fears, and stirring up their Zeal and Courage: As if he would say ye are but a few & weak Companie to undertake the Reformation, who have been in miserie under the Babylonish Captivitie, and fiery furnace of a prolonged affliction, and so have not that Courage that is necessarie to carry on my work: But if you would study and endeavour to have right uptakings of me, as the *LORD of hosts*, Stronger by far than all your Enemies, then ye will not be afraid to go on in the work, when you see I am able to secure you against all oppositions

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positions, And indeed right uptakings of GOD and his promised presence, will be argument e-
nough to put *Life & Courage* in the most timorous Member of this house, to act vigorously for GOD and his intrests, when inferiour Creatures are backed with superiour, they will put on courage, and venter far: a cowardly Scouldier or Servant when he is under a couragious Captain or Master, will be quite another thing than alone how much more should Magistrats, Ministers, and people be valiant for the truth, when they have GOD to own them. *Psalm 118, 6. The LORD is on my side: I will not fear what man can do unto me:* and how safe and secure will that Land & that Church be about whom the *LORD* will be as a wall of fire; whatever carnal reason may say to the contrair, and to have God not only to be a wall of fire round about, But to be the Glory in the midst of us, must be a desireable state, for as this will reflect comfort upon us who are lodged within such blessed Boundarie, so it will reflect terrour upon the Adversaries, which will make them not only not to come near, but to flee away as you have it; *Psal: 48. 3. 4. 5. and 6 Verse. GOD is known in her palaces for a Refuge. For Lo, the Kings were Assembled they passed by together, they saw it, and so they marvelled, they were troubled, and hasted*

hasted away, fear took hold on them and pain
 as a Woman in Travel : And O what a Rich
 promise have we for such a securitie, if we will
 but answer GODS Call, and be found in our
 dutie, Zech. 2. 5. *For I saith the Lord, will be unto
 her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glorie
 in the midst of her:* Why should we be afraid,
 for if we under so many eminent Calls of
 GOD, and so many gracious promises of his pre-
 sence and conduct, then we are under a Captain
 General that never failed his Church, & can ac-
 complish their compleat deliverance, over the
 greatest enemies that oppole it, he can lay *Pha-*
raob and his Army in the depths of the Sea, and
 divide the mighty waters that his Redeemed
 might pass through, *He can make the little hills*
and great mountains to get out of the Way,
Psal: 114, verse 3. The sea saw it, and fled, Jordan
was driven back, The mountarns skipped like Rams,
& the little hills like Lambs: why what was the mat-
 ter, could not thou O Sea, have kept still thy
 ordinary motion and currents ? & you little hills
 and great mountains your ordinary posture ,
 and place, and have stopped the deliverance
 of the Church out of *Ægypt*, and their march
 towards *Canaan*? Was it the terror of *Pharaoh*,
 and his host, or of *Moses*, and the armies of
Israel, that made you quite your ground, and
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give way : No, no, it was for none of these, if they had not been headed by the Mighty GOD of Jacob ; it was the prelence of JEHOVAH that made the Earth to tremble , the depths dry up , and the mountains get out of the Churches way : verle 5. What ailed thee, O thou Sea, that thou fleddest ? Thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back ? Verse 6. Ye mountains that ye skipped like Rams, and ye little hills like Lambs ? ver. 7. Tremble thou Earth, at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the GOD of Jacob. What need you fear then to throw down the Groves ? Repair GODS Altar, and build His house, Gideon, and Nebemias like , when the LORD of Hosts is with you : may you not clearly see , that your help is in the Name of the Lord , but your fear is in the name of man ! Are you Zerubbabels, Joshuaes, and Nebemias ? Persons in publick Trust ? then ye ought to carry like God, because ye are in Gods place, And carry by your Offices that Title in the World , Psal. 82. 6. I said ye are Gods, &c. And among other things ye should tremble Him in Courage, and Holinels , are none of the least. What a vile sight is it to see a drunken god ! or a swearing god ! (if I may so express it) And how unbecoming a thing is it also to see a trembling god ! You that ought to be a terroure to others, and would be so, if you

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manage that Office and Trust aright, with that Courage, Resolution, and Boldnes , yet when you faint in it , in order to the work of *God* , it sayes that other persons, and inferiours too, are a terrour to you.

Now for removing of this distemper of Humane and slavish fear , that Courage and Resolution may take its place. Let me recommend this one Remedy unto one and all of you , e. specially such as stand in publick Office, and it is a cure with a (*probatum est*) tryed , and left to Magistrates, and Ministers, by that great man *Moses*, *Heb. 11. 27.* verse, it is said there , *He feared not the wrath of a King , as seeing Him who is invisible :* And yet any might think he had great reason to be afraid of so potent an Enemie, who with his Ancestours had detained the Church in bondage for four hundred years, and so it is like questioned neither his power , nor his right to detain them ; But the Text tells you what was the Antidote against this fear, *Viz. That by Faith he saw Him who is invisible; his faith was at work in heaven to get God to counsel, assist, & strengthen him , while his hands were at work on Earth, to relieve the Church and people of GOD from their Long and sore Bondage, I wish that all the great Ones of the Land, and especially such as are in publick Office had the Exercile of this Faith, by which they might*

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take up the Almighty power of God, and his Every where Presence, that so their fears and faint-heartednes , might be removed, if Moses had been possessed with many peoples fears in our day; it's like he would have made an Act of Comprehension, and Compounded with Pharaoh, and so marred the Churches deliverance: This was the Remedie, that good Hezekiah also made use of, to encouradge his Subjects and Souldiers, against the fears and threats of a very bold and huffie Adversary, as you may read 2 Chron: 32. Verse 7. Be strong and Couragious, be not afraid, nor dismayed for the King of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there is more with us then with him. Verse 8. With him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battels. And while he made use of this excellent Remedy, for their Support and Encouragement, under such sad Circumstances, how successful was it, for the relief of the spirits of that people: Therefore it is laid in the Latter part of the 8. Verse, *The People rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah King of Judah.*

But did this great King, and his people rest so upon the LORD, as to neglect the use of Ordinary means? No, for we see Verse 5. *That strengthened himself, by the use of all outward means, and built up all the wall that was broken, and he raised it up to the Towers, and another wall*

without, and repaired Millo in the City of David, and made Darts and Shields in abundance. And verse 6. He set Captains of warr over the People, and gathered them together to him in the street of the gate of the City: And yet he counted all these outward lawful means, but as a Quick sand in comparison, for you see in the 7. and 8. verles, which we have read, he dropt his main Anchor upon the ROCK of Ages; And the Issue declared that he was no looser thereby.

I come in the next place to the use of the Doctrine. And first, *It reproves one and all of us, in the different, Stations, Offices, and Circumstances that we are into, for our negligence and unconcernedness in carrying on this work of God, when such a rich occasion, and eminent call has been put in our hands.* But if we will mourn for our bygone negligence, and amend our wayes for the future, and fall vigorously to this Reformation Work which my Text calls us to; then we may expect that God will pardon byp st neglects, when he sees our future faithfulness and diligence.

The second Use is, To Exhort one and all of you, Especially the Members of this Honourable and High Court of Parliament, carefully to set about this begun work of Reformation, and to take notice of Gods call to you this day, for this end and purpose: For, if I know any thing of the mind

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mind of GOD, this is the Message he has commanded me to deliver you, and what obedience ye give to it, the *Divine Eye* will certainly observe: And if ye will answer Gods call aright, there is a sixfold Reformation, that all of us in our Stations must endeavour.

The First is, Personal Reformation, which God calls for at the Hands of every person in particular, Ezeck: 18. Verse 30. *Repent and turn your selves from all your Transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruine.* And verse 31. *Cast away from you, all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed, and make you a new Heart, and a new Spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?* And this personal Reformation is not only commanded in the Old, but also in the New Testament, 2 Cor: 7: 1: *Let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting Holiness in the fear of God.* Heb: 12: 1. *Let us lay aside every weight, Yea, and our predominant sins that so easily beset us:* All which Scriptures tells us, both the necessity of this Reformation, and the difficulty of it, which should awaken us unto great diligence and care there about.

And as this personal Reformation is Commanded of GOD, so it is Commanded to others by thole that have tryed it, and found the good of it themselves: as David did to his Son Solo-

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mon, and his Princes, 1 Chron. 22. 19. Now set your heart, and your Soul to seek the LORD your GOD: And it is recorded to the Commendation of *Jehosaphat*, 2 Chro: 20. 3. That beset himself to seek the LORD Kings, Nobles, Gentry, Ministers and others, will be bad Reformers of such as are under their Charge, who seek not the LORD themselves: O that our Closets, our Consciences, and our Conversations might be witnesses to our Personal Reformation; It is clear enough from Scripture, that the LORD may make use of great Persons for the Church, and Children, who yet may be Strangers unto personal Reformation themselves, as *Je-hu* and *Je-ash* were but one of the best motives to make persons in publick trust, carefull for the Reformation of others, is to be truely Reformed themselves.

A Second Reformation which we should endeavour in our station, and that is Family Reformation what an Excellent patern, does David lay before us for this, Psal: 101. Particularly the 7 Verse, *He that worketh in deceit, shall not dwell in my House.* And how is *Abraham* commended by the LORD for this thing? Gen. 18 19 Verse. *For I know him that he will Command his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD.* O what a heavie Reckoning will

will many Masters of Families and Parents meet with, for their neglect of this at the great day, besides the Judgements that it draws down upon them, and their Families in this World: one Instance whereof ye have, not to name others.

Zecl. 14. 17 Verse: And it shall be, that who so will not come up of all the Families of the Earth unto Jerusalem, to worship the King, the LORD of Hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. Which tells us, that persons and families who make no Conscience to attend upon the publick Instituted worship of GOD, it is to be feared that they are strangers to a personal and family Reformation at home; whereas persons that make Conscience of family Reformation will not dare to slight and neglect the publick Instituted worship of GOD.

A Third Reformation, That we should endeavour in our stations, and that is *Sanctuarie Reformation*, Hezekiah is an excellent pattern in this, who himself set about it so timeouslie, *2 Chron: 29. 3. verse, In the first year of his reign, in the first moneth did he open the doors of the house of the Lord, and commanded the rubbish to be taken out, and set up Priests and Officers therein, and gave them a strict charge to mind their work; Lamenting the defilements and corruptions that had crept into it: To this I may add the necessity and profitableness*

ness of Universities and School Reformation, a thing greatly necessarie in order to Sanctuary and publick Reformation; For where Seminaries of Learning are tainted, they prove the Bane of the Church, and State also.

A Fourth Reformation. That we should endeavour in our Stations, is *Judicatorie Reformation*, That all the Judicatories in the Land, from the highest to the lowest, may be reformed: for upon search it will be found that many of them are not filled with such persons, as have sound principles disposing them to Advance the present work of Reformation, neither true loyalty to their Majesties, nor affection to the Established Government, Great care therefore should be taken by the *supream Judicatorie* of this Nation, that truth which is fallen in our streets, & Judgement, may be raised to their feet again, And that the iniquitie, oppression, and Injustice, for which the Land mourns, may be removed, and we may have no more occasion for that Complaint, *Isa: 59. 14, 15. verles.* *And judgement is turned away backward, and Justice standeth afar off, for Truth is fallen in the streets, and Equity cannot enter:* You in whom is lodged the Supream Power, would take care, that the poor, who hang to long on, and cannot get their Caufe discussed, may get Justice Executed

ed speedily, and that without partiality."

5ly, You should also take special Care, of Militarie, or Armie Reformation, that such Officers only get and keep their Commissions, as are true to the Established Government: You have had sufficient warnings of these things already, to make you warry in time coming, but I must freely tell you that friendship Interest, and Covetousness doth often spoile these things.

Lastly, You are called in your Stations, to mind a National Reformation, that the *LORD* may be worshipped according to the present Established Government (which is most suitable to the Word of *GOD*, and to which we stand greatly obliedged) from the one End unto the other, according to the Example of good *Jehosaphat*, 2 Chron: 16: 4: *And Jehosaphat dwelt at Jerusalem, and he went out again through the people, from Beersheba to Mount Edraim, and brought them back unto the LORD GOD of their Fathers:* Your Care and Zeal in this Matter would make you bear that excellent name in future Ages; *The repairers of the Breach of the Church of Scotland, and the restorers of the Paths to dwell in,* Isa. 58: 12: This would be a mean to prevail with the *LORD* to come and dwell among us, and

and fill his House with his Glory. Magistrates should command it, Ministers should preach it, the People should pray for it, and Souldiers oversee it, where it is needful: And if all persons concerned would act Cordially and unanimously with Resolution and Couradge in their several Stations, as they are called and Employed: I doubt not but our Land might yet be called *JEHOVA Shamma*, the LORD is there.

But that I may shut up this Discourse, I shall only add a few Motives; and but name them to press you to this Duty.

The *First Motive* is this, That if you whom GOD hath put in *Publick Trust*, and Authority, take care to build GODS House, ye shall be no looser by it, for this is the way to engage GOD to build, and perpetuate your houses: If ye will establish His Throne, that he may reign in the Hearts of the Inhabitants of the Land, in & by his own Ordinances; This will be a notable Mean for establishing the Kings Throne, *Proverbs, 29: 14: Psal: 89: 2: 3: 4: verles, &c.*

The *Second Motive* is this, That the Generations to come, will bless you, who were Instrumental in your places, to recover the Ruined Work of GOD in the Land, and to get the pure Gospel Light set up every where: To let the

the Wilderness-- Travellers see the way to the Kingdom: Will not the posterity that came After us, & get the good of this Reformation, say, blessed be such a Noble family, and such a Gentlemans family and posterity, who laid out themselves for the true worship of GOD, who when it was ready to be swallowed up and extinguisched, who recovered it out of the hand of the Enemie, and delivered it cleanly and safely down to us their posterity, or else we had perished in superstition and darknes.

Thirdly, This should press you to a through and universal Refotmation in the Land, because it will be a notable Bulwark, to defend us from the invasions of adversaries, & I lay it before you that are States men, and are for State policie, as one of Heavens politicks, for the securing the Nation, under the prospect of most imminent dangers, you have a tryed instance of this, 2 Chron: 17. 7. Also in the third year of *Jehosopha*t's Reign, he sent to his Princes, even to *Banhael*, and to *Obadiab*, and to *Zechariab*, & to *Nathaneel*, and to *Micajab*, to teach in the citys of *Judah*, and with them he sent *Levites*, verse 8 and 9. *They taught in Judah; and had the Book of the Law of the LORD with them, and went throughout all the Cities of Judah, and taught the people:* and the 10 verse tells us, what a great security

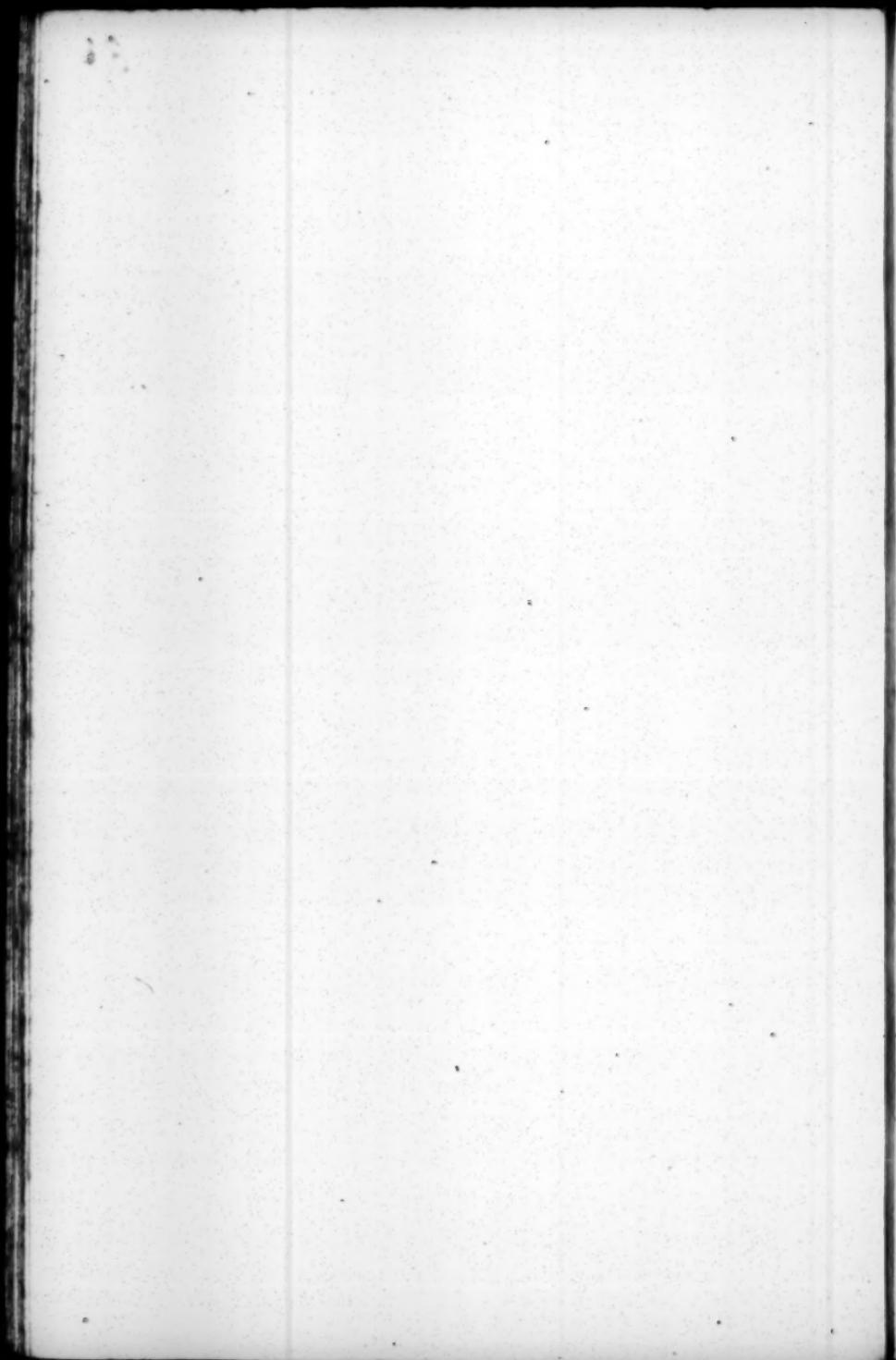
ty it brought along with it, to the Land, For the Fear of the LORD, fell upon all the Kingdoms of the Lands that were round about Judah: so that they made no war against Jehosaphat, this you see is the sweet advantage, that arises from true & thorough Reformation, and should not this move you to make use of it, and then you will have GOD's security, and GOD's security is the best security.

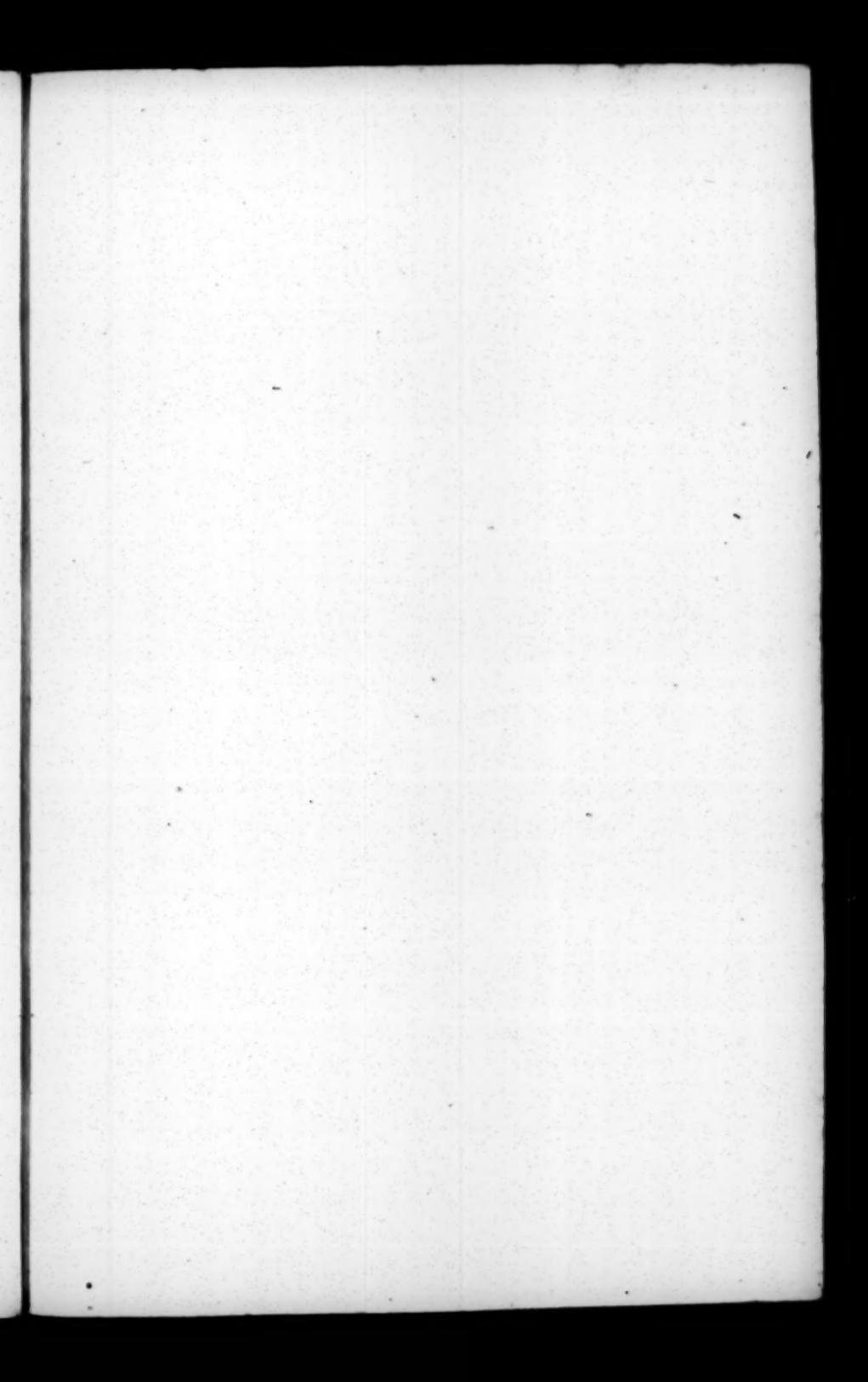
Shew your selves therefore Men of Courage; and Zeal for GOD, and his cause, and interests, and ye need not question, but he will be for you.

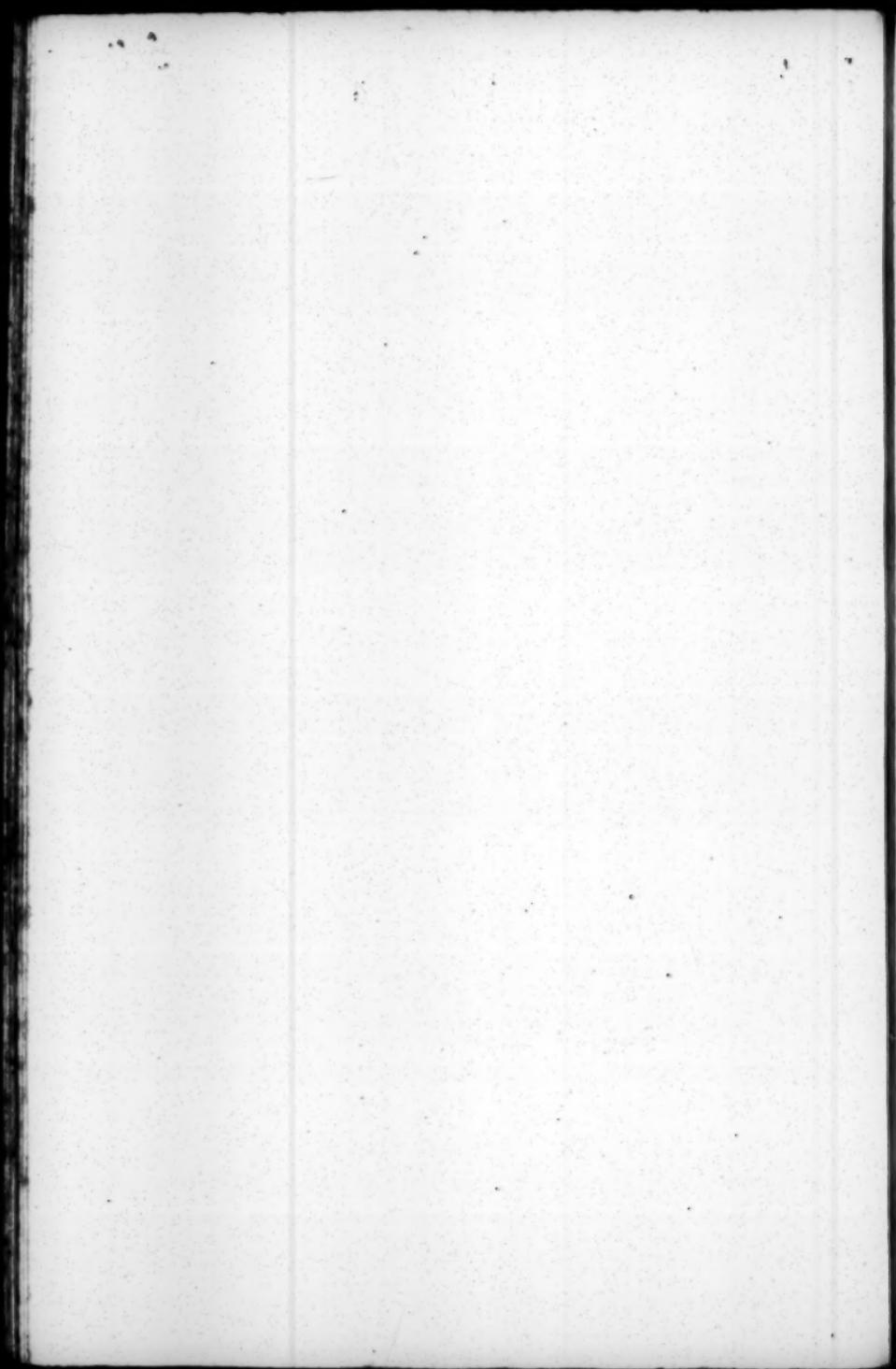
Lastly, And I shall add no more, your being active and faithful for GOD & his work, will upon a reflection, even under troubles and tryals in this World, be verie supporting, and refreshing, But O What a cordial will it be in a dying hour, when all the Compositions of Apothecaries have lost their Relish, & when neither Riches, nor Honours, nor pleasures of this World, will have any significancie: with good Hezekiah, *Isaiah, 38: 2,3. verses.* Turn your faces to the wall, & pray, Remember now, O LORD, I beseech Thee, how I have walked before Thee in Truth, and with a perfect Heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. I say this will be the Great support, and Consolations of your hearts, who are persons of publick trust, when ye come to the

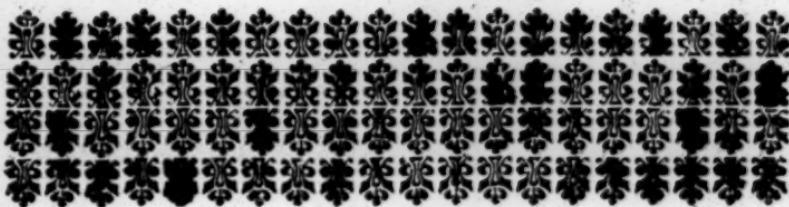
the last step, between time & eternitie: Let me therefore with all humility and earnestness, Beseech you, O Zerubabel, his Majesties high Commissioner, & you who are the Officers of State, and you the rest of the Members of this honourable Parliament, in the words of my Text, Yet Now, O Zerubabel, be strong, saith the **LORD**, and be strong O Joshua, Son of Josedech the high Priest; and be strong all ye people of the land, saith the **LORD**; and work, for I am with you, saith the **LORD** of Hosts; Even so be it. **AMEN.**

F I N I S.









Col: 4. 17.

*And say to Archippus, take heed to the Ministrie
which thou hast received in the LORD; that thou
fulfill it.*



THE Occasion of the Apostle *Paul*, his writing this Epistle from *Rome*, while he was Prisoner there, unto this Church of *Colosse* seems to be from the Information he had by *Epa:phras* the Minister of the place, holding forth the danger, that, that Church was into, of being corrupted both in her principles and worship, and that as well from *Jews* upon the one hand, as *Gentiles* upon the other.

The Apostles scope in this Epistle, is to confirm them, in the Doctrine Preached by *Epa:phras*, their honest Minister, and to press them to the further knowledge & practice of Godliness; and that both as to the General and special duties of

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Christianity, in the conclusion of this Epistle, which is from the 9 Verse to the End. We have several salutations, wherein some are saluted and Commended as Verses 10. 11. Some saluted and exhorted, that they may stand perfect and compleat in all the will of GOD, as Verse 12: &c. Some are saluted and directed, as Verse 16, and some are saluted and admonished as in this Text: *And say to Archippus, Take heed to the Ministrie which thou hast received in the LORD, that thou fulfill it.* As if the Apostle Paul would say to the People, Commend me also to *Archippus* your Minister, and tell him from me, to take heed that he do not his work careleslie, and by halfs; But as he has received his Commission from the LORD, so let him fulfil it, and that by the constant and diligent performing of all the duties belonging to so great and weighty a Charge.

Whither this *Archippus* was Colleague to *Ephras*, or whither he was Pastor of the Laodecean Church, (as some Interpreters assert, and the connexion with the proceeding verse, seems to favour it) I shall not determine, and it is a matter of no great importance; for wherever he was Minister, it is like he was fallen Remiss in his Office, A Fault, that I fear too too many of us may be charged with, which remissne

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flows sometimes I conceive from prevalent corruption within, and too much love of the world without, As also from these discouragements that Ministers often meet with from their people, either upon the account of their unprofitableness, under the means and pains bestowed upon them, or upon the account of that opposition which their people make to the work of GOD among their hands.

Thir words at first view, fall into two parts, viz. an injunction and a message, The injunction is to the people, in these words, and say to *Archippus*, the message they are to tell him from the Apostle, *is to take heed to his Ministrie, how he has received it, and how he may fulfil it aright.*

But this verle being an Exhortation, contains more particularly in it these four things, 1. The person exhorted, the *Lazie Minister.* 2. The thing he is exhorted *to take heed to thy Ministry, &c.* 3. We have the Arguments pressing this heedfulness: 1. Its a trust, and perlons must take heed to their trut, because it is not so much their own matters, as others they are to be concerned about. 2. It is a great trust that Ministers have committed to them, when they have the Precious, and Immortal Souls of Men, to take care about.

The fourth thing in the words, is the *modus,*

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of the manner how he is to notice and manage this Ministry, he is to heed it and manage it so, as to fulfil it. And these that would discharge this Office aright, must carefully mind not only the Extensiveness, but also the Intensiveness of this Work, for the mere tale of duties will not be sufficient to fulfil this Ministry, except they have their proportionable weight and measure, even such as will make them pals, when tryed and weighted in the ballance of the *Sanctuary*.

Thir words affords us three Doctrines; the first Doctrine is this, That People perceiving their Minister fail in the Office of his Ministry, may and ought to admonish him, but in Love, and with all due respect to his Person and Office, *1 Timothy 5. 1. Rebuke not an Elder, but Exhort him as a Father, &c.*

There is no power of Jurisdiction in the People from this Text, to inflict Church Censures on their Minister: For all that is said here, inferreth no more, then such an admonition as any private Christian may give him.

The second Doctrine is, That great Heedfulness is required of Ministers in order to the right discharge of their Office.

The third Doctrine is, That among other Considerations pressing us to fulfil this Ministry, this

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this should be none of the least, that we have received it of the LOR^D.

Of the first Doctrine I shall say no more, and this third Observation will be touched in the Prosecution of the second, which is that I shall insist upon, as being most proper to this Occasion.

And that I may doe it as briefly as possible, I shall in the first place shew you some of these Qualifications implied in this Heedfulness (that the Text calls for) which are necessary to the right fulfilling of a Mans Ministrie.

Secondly, I shall give you the Reasons of the Doctrine, and thirdly the use of All.

The first Qualification then implied here, as necessary to make a Minister take heed to manage his Office aright is, Wisdom and Knowledge, and that not only in the Speculative, but in the practical part of Religion. I think both these are needful to make a Minister *apt to teach*, 1 Tim. 3. 2. or else his Ministry will be rather Art-work, then Heart-work. Unsanctified wits have been in all Ages greatly prejudicial to the Church, and we have not wanted sad Instances thercof in our day.

I say then, that the Ministers of Christ, must be men of Knowledge, for they are Watchmen, and Watchmen must have Eyes in their Head, therefore

therefore they are called Seers, *1 Sam. 9.9*: Come let us go to the Seer, they are to point out to the People their Way, their Danger, and their Duty, as we may also see from *Isaiah 21.* and *6.* Verse to the *13.* Verse, *And if they be blind, what burt may suddenly befall the Church,* *Isaiah 9. Verse 16.* *For the leaders of this People cause them to Erre,* and they that are led of them are destroyed.

Ignorance causes Error, and Error Destruction, therefore said the Apostle *Paul* to the Elders of *Ephesus*, *Acts 20. 28.* *Take heed therefore unto your selves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed them, viz:* With Knowledge and Understanding, that they may be soundly principled, &c right in the Faith, and he gives the reason of it, *Verses 29. and 30.* *For grievous wolves will enter in amongst you, speaking perverse things to corrupt your People, and to draw Disciples after them.*

Ministers should be like the beasts about Christ's Throne, *Rev. 4. 6.* *Full of Eyes within and without, before and behide:* Within looking to the Frame and Constitution of their own Hearts, without to the Duties they ought to perform, and the Snares and Dangers they must beware of, in following of their Duty: They must have Eyes looking before them unto God for Counsel and Direction, and they must have eyes

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eyes looking behind them unto the flocks which they lead. Every Minister is as it were the Treasurer of the place where he lives, *Malachy 2. 7. For the Priests lips should keep Knowledge, and the people should seek the law at his mouth,* and if the Ministers want this Treasurie of Spiritual knowledge and Wisdom, they will not be able to distinguish aright between Truth and Errour, Sin and Duty: They cannot instruct the Ignorant, resolve doubts, quiet the troubled Conscience, feed the Hungry, & comfort the *discouraged Soul.* Let *Antichrist* have blind and ignorant Watchmen, but Our LORD JESUS CHRIST should have such Ministers as are throughly furnished for every Good Work, *2 Tim: 3: 17: That the Man of GOD may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all Good Works.*

The second Qualification implied in this *Take heed,* (for a Ministers right discharging of his Office) is painfulness and diligence, for knowledge must issue unto action: Ministers are Angels, and Angels are not only full of Eyes (as I laid before) but also full of Hands and Wings, *Ezek: 1: 8: And they had the Hands of a Man under their Wings on their four sides, &c:* Therefore it is said, *Rev: 4: 8: That they rest not day nor night, they know much, therefore they Act much.*

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The Heathen could tell us that unpractical knowledge signifies nothing, *Scire tuum nib. l est, nisi te scire hoc sciat alter.*

And the *Ægyptians* painted a Tongue with a hand under it to shew that knowledge, when practiced was good. And we see that the blessing is not promised to the bare knowledge, but to the practice of Commanded duties, *John. 13. 17. If ye know these things, happy are ye if you do them, and Rev: 22. Verle 14. Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have Right to the Tree of Life, and enter in through the Gates unto the City.* We are Spiritual harvest men, and the Crop is very precious, which we are to gather in, If it be lost by our sloath, we will pay dear for it.

The third qualification implied here (in this , *Take heed to your Ministrie*) is faithfulness: O how much need had we to take heed that we do our Ministerial work faithfullie, now faithfulness is a proportioning our obedience to the Command: to be impartial in all the Administrations of the house of GOD: See what a charge the Apostle *Paul* gives *Timothie*, *1 Tim. 5. 21. I Charge thee before GOD, and the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the elect Angels that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partialitie.* Where we see that

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that he that is partial cannot be faithful, an un-faithful Minister is perfidious both to GOD and man. Zeph. 3.4. *It is said there, their Prophets are light and Treacherous persons: Treacherous Persons in the Hebrews, as a Learned Interpreter observes, is Viri Prevaricationum qui debitam Deo & populo fidem pariter violaverint.* And it is the highest Treacherie that can be, to be false to GOD and Robb Him of the Souls of men; That is worthy of our Consideration recorded. Ezek: 3. 20. *Because thou hast not given him warning; He shall die in his sin, but his Blood shall I require at thine hand.* Now if a Minister may Perish for not warning of Sinners, much more for Encouraging them to Sin, by corrupt Doctrine, and a Lewd life, for if death be in an Gmission, much more must it be in positive Evils. Let me add one word more on this head, that a faithful minister, must b: a fearless Minister, he must not be affraid of the faces of men, when he is to deliver the Truths of GOD. The LORD four times in one Verse. Ezek. 2. 6. *Forbids the Prophet to fear. And thou Son of man be not affraid of them, neither be affraid of their words, though Briers and Thorns be with thee, and thou doest dwell among Scorpions: Be not affraied of their words, nor dismayed at their looks, though they be a Rebellious House.*

A Fourth qualification necessarie for managing

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aging this office implied in this exhortation
(take heed to thy Ministry) is prudence which is
necessarie to direct us in the dexterous man-
agement of all the parts of our work, and
more especially as to the Methods whereby, and
the Sealons wherein they may be done to the
best advantage, and there is no part of our
Ministerial work, which requires more pru-
dence in the right managing of it, then that of
Reproof, to do that so as it may be accepted as
a kindness by the person reproved, and as an ex-
cellent Oyle that will not break the head, as
the Psalmist expresses it. *Psal: 141. Verse, 5.*
Let the Righteous Smite me, it shall be a kindness;
and let them reprove me, it shall be an excellent Oyl;
which shall not break my head: For as faithfulness
and wisdom ponders the necessity of the duty;
So prudence does consider the fittest time, and
manner of application with respect to the per-
son, with what prudence and dexteritie did
Nathan prepare *David* in that Parable. *2 Sam:*
12. from the first *Verse* to the *6th*, before he
came to touch him in the quick with; *Thou*
art the man, *Verse 7.*

Fifthly, if we would take heed to fulfil this
Ministrie, we must be sincere and serious *Ecles:*
9. 10. And it is not Liklie that we will press
Gospel Truths and holiness, seriously home
upon

upon others, until we know the sweet and good
of them our selves, and the Apostle tells us. 2
Cor: 1. 12. Verse. That sincerity in our work
and walk will be no smal ground of our re-
joycing, when our consciences within, and
beholders without can testify, that we endeav-
oured sincerely and carefully to Manage this
trust committed to us, and Ministers had need
to take heed to this, because their work lying
about spiritual things they are more apt to be
deceived by hypocrisies creeping in both to
their hearts and duties, and many a time the
frequencie of them, is like to take away the
servencie of them: Ministers therefore would
often mind that word, to keep them diligent
at their work, 1 *Cor: 9. 27. Least when I preach*
the Gospel to others, I my self be a cast away.

6ly. This take heed, includes constancie and
perlervance, we must not think to do this work
by fits and starts; Nor be like these foolish *Galatians*, *Galatians 3 chap. and 3 ver.* To begin in
the spirit, and end in the flesh, we must not put our
hand to the plough and look back, Ye know
what CHRIST lays of such, *Luke 9. 62. They are*
not fit for the Kingdom of GOD, they are not fit for
managing of his Kingdom aright in this
world, and if they do not that, they may be
afraid to be shut out of his Kingdom in the
next. I come

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I come next to the Reasons of the doctrine, why Ministers must be very heedfull, and carefull about their Ministerial work, and that 1st. Because it is a great trust far above any other trust in this world, when immortal Souls are committed to us, about which the thoughts of the most high have been concerned from Eternity, and for the Redemption of which GOD manifested in the flesh, shed his precious blood: & for espousing of whom he has put us unto the Ministrie. I think we should never go this errand, but with *Abrahams servant*. Gen. 24 12. *We should pray, O LORD GOD and Father of My Master JESUS CHRIST, (Who has promised him a great backing and a numerous seed, upon which he may see the satisfaction of the travel of his Soul) send me good speed this day, and put forth thy power in the preached Gospel, that Thy people may be a willing people, O but it be a high and a great calling to trade about the saving of Souls, one of which is a more precious Jewel than the whole world can purchase or redeem, And CHRIST tells us this out of his own Mouth, Matth: 16. 26. Surely of all other persons Ministers shou'd be most diligent, who have both their own Souls to save, and others.*

The second reason why we must take heed to our Ministerial work is, because it is a difficult work,

work, partly from the various and numerous enemies that oppose it, Satan that roaring lion, and restless enemie of the Church standing at our right hand. *Zech. 3.1.* Also what principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places, what rulers of the darkness of this world have we to wrestle against. *Eph. 6.12*, yea what opposition from men among whom we live, some with open violence breaking down as far as they can the caried work: others under a vizour and pretence to build with us, like the false apostles; intending nothing less then to bring us back to abandoned Corruptions in the House of GOD.

Partly from our own Ignorance (the work is made difficult) which disables us to manage this trust to the best advantage, how hard is it for Ministers to speake aright to the various Cases and Conditions of their People, and to find fitt words to hold forth the Evil of Sin by, the Lovelinets of Christ, The beauty of Holiness, the danger of living careleſſ and unconcernedly under the means of Grace, and repeated offers of the Gopel.

The third Reason why Ministers had need to take heed to their Ministry is this, that there has been Ministers in the Church, (and we have had sad Instances of it in our days) professing & pretending highly for CHRIST, and the pureſſ work

work of Reformation, that afterwards when the Occasion and Tentation offered, have betrayed the cause, discovered their rotteness, and ruined the Church, and Work of GOD, as far as they could. Some of them bewitched and enticed with the Riches of this World so to do, like *Judas* and *Demas*: Others with the Honours of this World, like *Diotrephes*, and O how many *Archippus*-like even in the best of times would be found *Coldriffe* and *Remisse* in this great Work.

4^{ly}. We must take heed to our Ministry, if we consider what a great LORD and Master we have received it from. And whose Eye is alwayes upon us, to see how we manage this trust as it was upon the Angels of the seven Churches, and his writting to them since he Ascended, and discovering their failures and short comings, with the punishments due thereunto, should be a warning to Ministers in all succeeding Ages of the Church, to take heed to their Ministrie.

5^{ly}. We had need to take heed to our Ministry, when we consider with what a severe certification, our great LORD and Master has committed it unto us, *Ezek: 17, 18. ver.* *Son of man I have made thee a Watchman to the house of Israel, therefore bear the word at my mouth, and give them*

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a warning from me, when I say unto the wicked thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning from me, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand.

6ly Ministers had need to take heed to manadge their trust aright, seeing a severe account will be required of them, for it is a stewardship that must be reckoned for, and none of us know how soon that message may be sent unto us, *Luke 16. 2. Give an account of thy Stewardship, and whether we have received moe or fewer talents, we would always remember to be so laying them out, and improving of them, as those that must give an account. Heb. 13: 17.*

Lastly. Such Ministers as have been heedfull and faithfull, shall be greatly rewarded, *Dan: 12 3 And they that be Wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the starrs for ever and ever. Matt: 24. 25, 26, 27. who then is a faithfull and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household to give them meat in due season, Blessed is that servant whom his LORD when he cometh shall find him so doing; Verily I say unto you, that he shall make him Ruler over all his goods. Rev: 2. 10. Be thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee a Crown of life. We would keep constantly and closely to this work*

work, and prosecute it with the greatest diligence that believe such a reward as this, which will eternaly compense all the labour and toyle in this World: We would also frequently consider what severe punishments shall be inflicted on the heedless and sloathful servant, *Matt: 24 Verse 48.* Unto the end; *But, and if that evil servant shall say my Lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow servant, and to eat and drink with the drunken.* The Lord of that servant shall come in a day, when he Looketh not for him, and an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with hypocrites, where shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth.

I come now to the use of the Doctrine, *is beedfulness*, in managing of the Ministeriall work so necessary in all the forementioned respects; Then let all of us that bear this office take heed to our Ministry, for this is the voice and call of my Text to every one of us, and especially with respect to those two things that ly in the latter part of the words.

The first is to take heed how, and from whom we received this Ministrie, whether from the **LORD JESUS CHRIST** or not, who is the only **LORD** and head of the Church, and whose prerrogative it is to set up and send forth Officers unto his Church, *Ezek: 2 3.* And He said unto him Son of man, I send thee unto the children

Children of Israel, I Who sit upon the Saphirine throne,
as you have it in the first Chapter of this Pro-
phesie of *Ezek: 26: Verse, And who has all power*
in mine hand. Christ is invested with all power
in Heaven and in Earth, *Math: 28: and 18:*
Verse, and therefore sends forth Officers unto all Nations.
And for this End, we must see that we be come
in at the right door, for there are some, as Christ
tells us, who call themselves Shepherds, that
come not in at this doar, *Io: 10: 1: Verse, But*
climb up another way, if we be right Ministers
of Christ, we must come in at three doors.
1. The door of an Internal call of GOD upon
the Soul. 2. The door of the External call of
the People. 3. The door of a legal *Mission* and
Ordination, by the laying on of the hands of the Pres-
bytry.

A second thing that lyes in the latter end of
the *Text*, about which we must take special
heed is this, that when ever we find our selves
entered by the right door unto this great and
difficult Work, we must take heed to fulfil it:
Every Minister must take heed to fill up at right
both the doing part, and the suffering part of
his *Ministry*, so as the work may not suf-
fer or be blamed on his *Accompt:* The
Apostle took care of this, and sets it as
a *Copy* before thir *Colloſſians*, Chapter first,

24: *Verse, Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the Afflictions of Christ, in my flesh, for his bodies sake, which is the Church.* The metaphor may be taken from a piece of curious drawn work, that the person, in filling up thereof, never puts in a stitch, but they look on both sides to see it be rightly done, and they Papper it over to keep it cleanly that they may get the masters approbation, so should both Ministers and Christians be very careful, both in their doing and suffering work, that they fill it up with all dexteritie, and keep it so as it may be presented with all purity; For I do believe that GOD has cut out so much doing and suffering work for his Church in the world, and that this is divided and subdivided to several Societies, and Persons, every one their part: So much for the Church in such an Age and place of the World, and so much for such an other Age and place of the World, and every Person ought to notice what is their particular allotment, that they may do it both proportionably, and commendable; and not be like an Ignorant, careless, and nesty seamster, to whom in a suit of curious Hangings was committed: The doing of a head, or a hand, or a Leg, and when it comes to be set together, it is either not filled up, or disproportionabl

tionable, or sullied, and so mars the beauty of the whole suite, and when the master comes in and sees how unhandsome it is, and calls the persons guilty; How will they be ashamed? with what care then should Ministers and people that profess Religion, to obey GODS Commands, and follow the noble Example of CHRIST and His Apostles, so mind to fill up what proportion, of either doing or suffering work that is committed to them as they may be able to abide the tryal of that day, and not be ashamed. This is that which the Apostle *Paul* seems to call all the People of GOD to, both ministers and others in this Text, with respect to the doing part, and in that of the first Chapter 24. *Verse*, formerly cited as to the suffering part, but alace this is too little heeded by many.

Now that we may discharge our Ministerial work well; Let me Intreat our care as to these four things.

First, Let us take care to be well seen in all parts of our work, the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government of the Church; and the Duties Relating to these.

Secondly, Let us be well seen into the cases of our People, that we may know how to instruct, Exhort, Reprove, and warn them both suitably and

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and seasonably, as to their various cases and Conditions.

Thirdly, In the doing of these things, let us alwayes keep our eye upon the right Rule, which we are to work and walk by; every Calling has some Rule to work by, which requires some Studie to know, or else a Person will but Bungle in his work. Now no calling hath a sure Rule, but the Christian calling, therefore it is that others varie in their Methods: But the Christian hath one standing Rule (The word of GOD) which is able to make the man of GOD perfect: this we must precisely keep by, and must not make the impositions of men, Education, Custome, Example, or Antiquity, our Rule, or any part of it, which the woman of *Samaria* pleads. *Job: 4 20.* For the justification of their worship in Mount *Gerizim*, being two hundred Years standing, But *CHRIST* Told her, *Verse. 22.* *Ye Worship ye know not what,* you have the wills, Examples, and Traditions of men for the warrant of your worship, but that is neither Law nor Light, nor Rule to you, seeing ye want my word which is the true Standart, and your good Intentions will neither make that worship which you dote upon acceptable to *G O D*, or profitable to you: For all Corrupt and false worship carries

carries no other Character in the Estimation of GOD, but such as is recorded. *Hosea. II. 12.*
Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit; we would beware of being of that number, and endeavour to be of the tribe of *Judah* which ruleth with GOD, and is faithfull with the Saints.

Lastly, If we would fulfill our Ministrie aright, *Let us wrestle much with the LOKD for his promised Spirit to teach us all things that concern the discharge of so great an office, to put us and keep us in a tight frame for our work, to instruct us by a strong hand both what, and, how to speak to our people:* And that he would make it first savorie to our own Souls, and then go along with us in the dispensing of the word, & seale it on the hearts of the hearers; for the Kings message is best believed & obeyed when it has the King's seal at it, then peoples faith will not stand in the wisdom of Mans words, but in the power of GOD. *1. Cor: 2. 4. 5. And my speech and my preaching, was not with enticing words of mans wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit, and of power, that your faith may not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God.* And in the whole of our work, let us chiefly aim at the good of Souls, the enlargement of CHRIST's Kingdom, and the Glory of GOD, from *Whom*, and by *Whom*, and to *Whom* are all things, to Him be Glorie for ever. Amen.

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